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National Intelligence Bulletin

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PORTUGAL

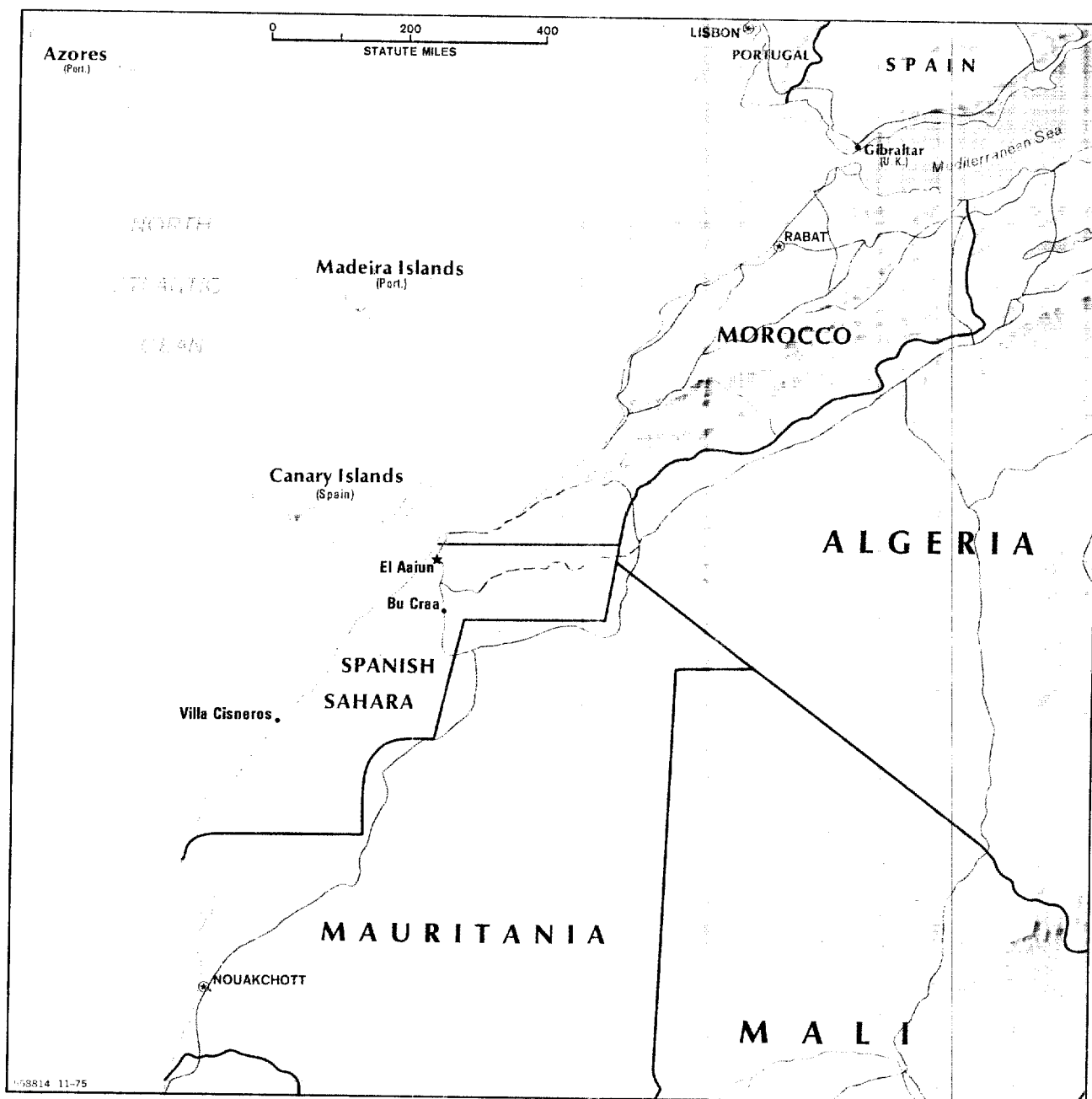
A major confrontation between the Azevedo government and Communist-led workers apparently ended early this morning with the signing of a new collective labor contract.

Although the terms of the new contract have not yet been made public, the workers were sufficiently placated to end their siege of Sao Bento palace, where Prime Minister Azevedo remained a virtual prisoner for two days. There was a danger yesterday that the confrontation would develop into a major challenge to the government when the demonstrating construction workers demanded not only a 44-percent wage increase, but also the return of pro-Communist former prime minister Vasco Goncalves.

Constituent assembly delegates, who spent Wednesday night trapped in the palace, left yesterday afternoon with the assistance of local troops. The troops refused to guarantee the safety of three assembly members—two leading Socialists and conservative former air force chief Galvao de Melo. The three remained with Azevedo after an attempt to evacuate them by military helicopter was frustrated by the crowd.

The government will have serious problems if it agreed to the construction workers' demands for a 44-percent increase in wages, especially since details of a new austerity program were published in the Lisbon press this week. The program calls for increased prices, reduced real wages, rationing of essential foodstuffs, and adjustments in the exchange rate to put Portugal on the road to economic recovery.

Before implementing these provisions, the government will have to weigh very carefully its ability to withstand the tension such a program is bound to create against the chaos that might result if something is not done to improve the economy.



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SPANISH SAHARA

Spanish, Moroccan, and Mauritanian officials in two days of talks in Madrid have made little progress toward an agreement on the future of Spanish Sahara.

Algerian opposition to a partition of the territory between Morocco and Mauritania is a major factor in retarding an accord. Press reports from Madrid, citing diplomatic sources, say Algerian President Boumedienne sent a message to Spanish Prime Minister Arias Wednesday. Boumedienne was presumably warning Arias against an agreement that would turn the territory over to Rabat and Nouakchott.

Algiers wants the people of Spanish Sahara to make their own choice in a referendum supervised by the UN. Although eager to get out of the territory, Madrid still wants the UN to play a role, possibly by establishing a temporary trusteeship and overseeing a referendum. The Moroccans have been unwilling to accept Spanish assurances that a trusteeship arrangement and a referendum could be rigged to result in a transfer of sovereignty to Morocco and Mauritania.

Madrid does have the option of ordering a rapid Spanish withdrawal. Spanish military forces in the territory have already pulled back to a 70-mile defense perimeter around the territorial capital of El Aaiun and to the southern port of Villa Cisneros. Although this concentration of forces will help avoid incidents with Moroccan irregulars, it does put Spain in position to pull out quickly. Augmented Spanish navy units in the area could provide a covering force for evacuation.

The evacuation of Spanish civilians to the Canary Islands, scheduled to end November 20, is all but complete. Only 200 of an estimated 18,000 Spanish civilians remain to be evacuated from El Aaiun. A few civilians will remain behind, and workers at the Bu Craa phosphate mines evidently intend to continue working regardless of political developments. The Spanish news agency has reported that some civilians have been recalled to El Aaiun to maintain essential services.

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LEBANON

Security in Beirut has deteriorated this week, although the principal combatants are still trying to avoid the return of heavy fighting. Commercial activity halted almost completely yesterday, after gradually increasing since the cease-fire went into effect on November 2.

Lebanese and Palestinian politicians have not been able to end the crisis by negotiations. The committee considering political reform has been meeting regularly, however, and reportedly is near agreement on abolishing the practice of hiring government employees on the basis of their religious affiliation. Lebanese leftists have long sought to end the system of confessional balance on which the country's governing system is based, as have the conservative Muslims who seek a larger proportion of public service jobs. Christians on the committee presumably feel that they can afford to make this concession—which many regard as inevitable—because their followers are generally better educated and better able to compete under a future merit system.

Prime Minister Karami's security committee has also been meeting, primarily to seek ways to stop politically motivated kidnappings. Several hundred persons have been seized and released this week as part of the bargaining between the several factions.

The cabinet remains deadlocked by the split between its Christian and Muslim members. At the meeting on Wednesday, President Franjiah made only a general plea for calm; Karami declined to spell out the details of the political compromise he proposed last weekend.

Outsiders are intensifying their efforts to mediate. An envoy from the Vatican will complete a fact-finding tour this weekend, but is not expected to make specific proposals for a political settlement. French emissary Couve de Murville probably will go to Beirut within the next few days, also to gather information. He stands a better chance of providing effective mediation.

The government's decision to accept Paris' offer to mediate resulted from the strong urgings of Lebanese Foreign Minister Taqla, a Greek Catholic, and from a general conviction that the effort could do no harm. Karami, a Muslim, has in the past resisted bringing in the French out of a conviction that they would sympathize with Lebanon's Christian minority. Karami's reservations may have lessened somewhat when the French embassy in Beirut demonstrated it could consult effectively on security problems with the Palestinians and Lebanese leftists during the recent fighting.

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USSR-CSCE

Deputy Foreign Minister Korniyenko responded in a substantive way on Wednesday to a US demarche on CSCE implementation, indicating that Moscow feels compelled to engage in a serious dialogue with the US on some implementation issues.

Moscow has consistently held that the provisions of the Helsinki agreement are not automatically self-implementing, but must be negotiated bilaterally. Moreover, with a follow-up meeting of CSCE signatories scheduled to take place in Belgrade in 1977, the Soviets have an interest in appearing to be responsive to Western initiatives.

Moscow would also like to appear to be living up to the letter, and even the spirit, of the agreement. Thus, the Soviets have asserted that they, in contrast to the US, have widely disseminated the text of the agreement. Moreover, they have, as provided for in the text, approved multiple exit/entry visas for US journalists, a procedure that was also extended to the French during Giscard's visit.

Appearances notwithstanding, the Soviets are also laying out the limits to which they will go. They have been particularly unreceptive on the military-related aspects of CSCE, the so-called confidence-building measures. For example, they are refusing to acknowledge advance notification by the West of military exercises or to send observers to them, as provided by the conference document. They have also stressed the aspects of the document they regard as advantageous, especially the statement on "inviolability of frontiers."

In addition to putting forth their own interpretations of what the Helsinki agreement does and does not require, the Soviets, as well as the East Europeans, have been quick to try to put the West on the defensive. Thus, Korniyenko complained about problems the Soviets have had in obtaining US visas and the inadequate dissemination of the CSCE text in the US. He also threw in an attack on Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, and Voice of America broadcasts as incompatible with the Helsinki agreement.

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YUGOSLAVIA-USSR

Yugoslav party secretary for ideology Todo Kurtovic has publicly questioned Moscow's assurances of non-interference in Yugoslav internal affairs.

Kurtovic, speaking to regime propagandists on Tuesday, expressed concern that the historical agreements that constitute the basis for a friendly, equal working relationship with Moscow are being reinterpreted by the Soviets. He also charged that "foreign circles" are trying to fragment the Yugoslav party in order to destroy its independent stance. Although these allegations avoid specific mention of the current Soviet leadership, they are the most pointed expression of Yugoslav unease over Soviet intentions in the recent anti-Stalinist campaign.

The Tito regime still wants to avoid an open break with Moscow over the activities of pro-Soviet subversives in Yugoslavia, but Belgrade's foreign policy priorities are in conflict with its domestic vigilance drive. The policy of restraint is weakening, and several Yugoslav newspapers—including the army weekly, *Narodna Armija*—have recently recalled the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia as inspiration for increased watchfulness against pro-Soviet machinations.

Moscow has not yet responded in kind. It has been depicting Soviet-Yugoslav relations as normal, partly in an attempt to avoid difficulties before the Soviet party congress and in preparation for the European Communist party conference.



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ECUADOR

There was no major violence during yesterday's nationwide strike, but some scattered confrontations between police and students occurred. The anticipated mass civil disobedience by political groups and various leftist student organizations did not materialize.

Several foreign press reports that a coup had occurred proved to be false; relative calm prevailed throughout Ecuador. No large troop concentrations were reported in the cities and if there was increased police patrolling, it was not noticeable.

By letting the strike proceed without government interference, President Rodriguez managed to avoid a showdown on his leadership, but his support among the military services does not appear to have improved.

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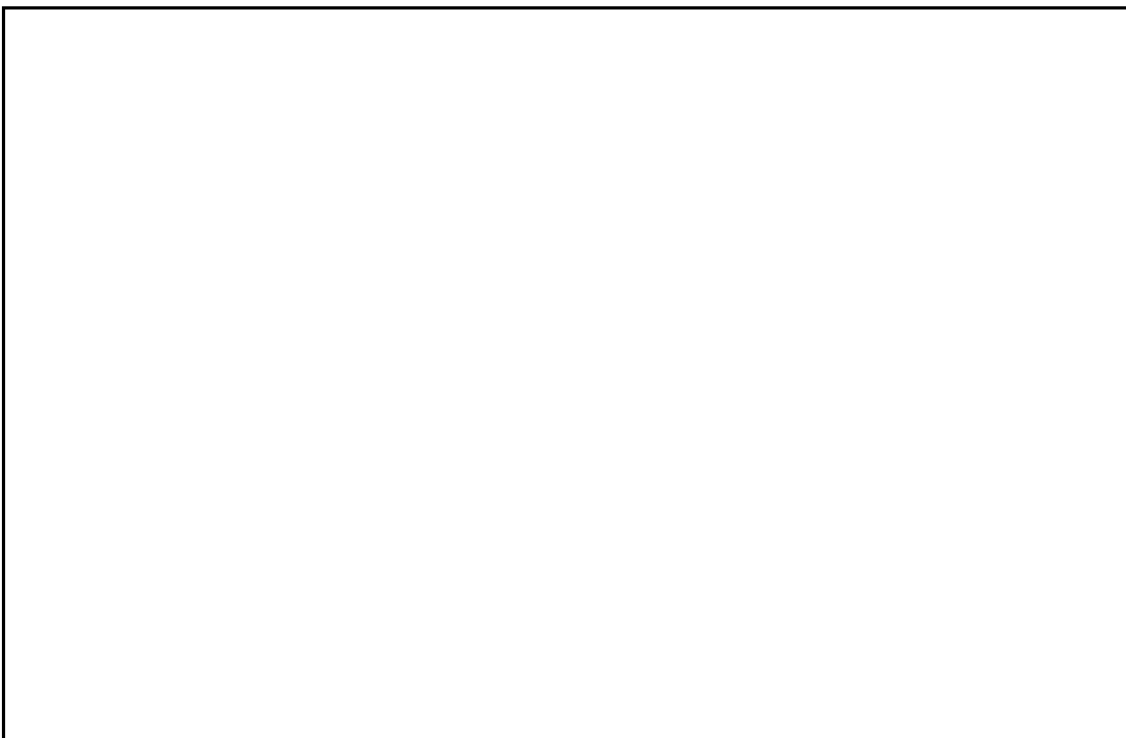
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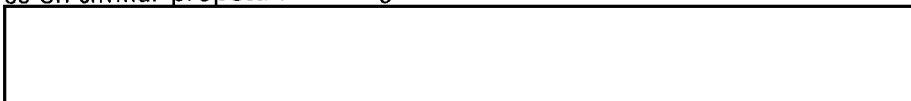
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WEST GERMANY - NETHERLANDS: The possibility of trading defense responsibilities bilaterally within NATO will be discussed by Dutch State Secretary for Defense Stermerdenk and West German defense officials on November 18. Dutch Defense Minister Vredling informally broached the subject with his West German counterpart at the Eurogroup conference earlier this month by suggesting that the Netherlands assume West Germany's naval role in the North Sea and that Bonn assume some Dutch defense roles in the central region. The NATO allies are wary of such Dutch proposals, however, fearing that The Hague's aim is to reduce its defense commitments to NATO. In the past West Germany and the Netherlands have been unable to agree on similar proposals and negotiations on the issue promise to be long and arduous.

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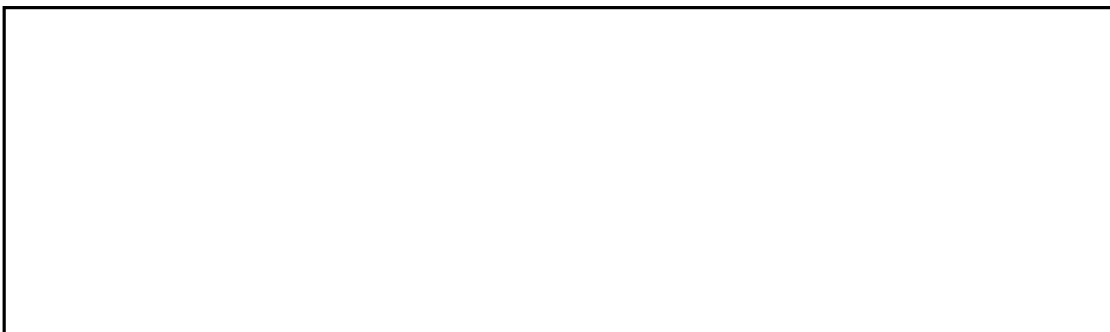


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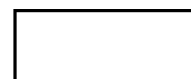
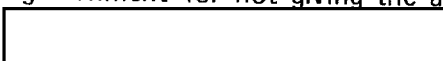
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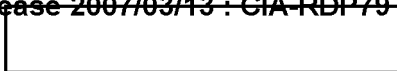


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ARGENTINA: Counterterrorist activities reached an all time high last week. On November 7 the air force participated for the first time in operations against terrorists in Tucuman Province, and army units in Mendoza, Rosario, and Salta rounded up some 1,600 reported terrorists on November 8. Army, coast guard, naval, and police forces conducted an exercise south of Buenos Aires, probably in preparation for a roundup in that area. Acting President Luder's authorization last month for such operations may placate those in the military who have criticized the government for not giving the armed forces a role in earlier antiguerrilla efforts.



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